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Input without Influence: The Silence and Scripts of Police and Community Relations

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ABSTRACT

Since its establishment in 1993, the Department of Justice's Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services has invested $14 billion into local police departments' efforts to improve community relations. Yet in 2015, the public's confidence in police reached its lowest point since 1993. Drawing on seven years of Chicago Police Board meeting transcripts, this article identifies one mechanism why, despite police investment, community relations can fail to improve. While community meetings where residents present complaints are envisioned as enhancing citizen voice, police replied to 74 percent of complaints with literal silence. When police were not silent, both police and residents repeated identifiable scripts—defined as stylized narratives based on generalized knowledge from typical events—that reflected divergent conceptualizations of community issues. Police use of silence and scripts are examples of "perfunctory policing," where officers superficially comply with procedural requirements of a program or practice, but resist substantive changes in performance—leaving residents to shoulder the consequences of police inaction. As local jurisdictions invest more into closing the gap between the government and public, insufficient analysis into *how* initiatives are implemented can legitimize decision-making processes that reinforce the preexisting social order, rendering community interactions more procedurally symbolic than substantively productive.

KEYWORDS: police and community relations; community meetings; urban policing; participatory governance; poverty governance; social order.

Police departments across the United States generally accept the importance of strong community relations in preserving public safety. From hiring more officers to mandating daily foot patrols, community policing promotes collaborative interactions between police and residents to dismantle symbolic and institutional barriers, advance officer accountability, and achieve joint law enforcement (Cordner 2014; Skogan and Hartnett 1997). In 1993, federal officials established the Department of Justice's Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS). Since then, COPS has invested $14 billion into local police departments' efforts to improve community relations (COPS Office n.d.). Also in 1993, Gallup began asking a nationally representative sample about their confidence in

police. Since then, however, the public's confidence in police has remained virtually unchanged—even returning to its 1993-low in 2015.[1]

Drawing on seven years of transcripts from the Chicago Police Board's public community meetings, this article identifies one mechanism for the reasons why police investment in community relations can fail to improve community relations. Jurisdictions across the United States increasingly see community meetings where residents submit complaints to police face-to-face as an intuitive way to improve police and community collaboration (Herbert 2006; Roussell and Gascón 2014; Skogan and Hartnett 1997). But relations are improved only if complaints are addressed, dialogue is open, and solutions are collaborative. Instead, the Chicago Police Department representative, either the superintendent or his deputy, replied to only about 26 percent of speakers—for the other 74 percent, the police department remained literally silent. The non-officer members of the Police Board typically replied to all complaints, but 72 percent of their replies consisted of announcing the speaker's allotted two minutes had elapsed, asking whether an official complaint had been submitted, or simply saying "thank you" and proceeding onto the next speaker. When police and resident exchanges did occur, both typically reverted to identifiable scripts—defined as stylized narratives based on generalized knowledge from typical events (Fagan and Geller 2015; Wilkinson and Fagan 1996)—that reflected contrasting conceptualizations of community issues. Specifically, divergent police and resident scripts spanned three domains of community issues: (a) how to measure their extent, (b) who is proximately responsible, and (c) what are the root causes. Whether dominated by silence or scripts, police and community meetings failed to reallocate police resources and reinforced the existing social order by devolving into a venue where residents provide input but without influence.

Police's use of silence and scripts are examples of what this study calls "perfunctory policing," where officers superficially comply with procedural requirements of a program or practice, but resist substantive changes in performance. Unlike hyper- and broken windows policing which seek to surveil (Brayne 2017; Wilson and Kelling 1982), or therapeutic policing which seeks to correct (Stuart 2016), perfunctory policing attempts to legitimize. By inviting input from external controls such as the community and adopting procedural changes, police decision-making can be legitimized even though outcomes remain unchanged. Perfunctory policing has important implications for participatory governance, street-level bureaucracy, and urban policing. First, silence and divergent scripts as a default mode of communication between government agents and local residents signify an unexplored mechanism for the reasons why greater citizen participation in local government often fails to achieve greater citizen influence (Levine 2017). While scripts might "fail" to achieve change, they affirmatively legitimize decisions and reinforce the existing social order by validating the input process even though the substantive outcome remains unaltered. Second, the final allocation of government services is not only determined by the discretionary decisions of street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky 1980), but also by the conduct of citizens, especially when they mirror the same behaviors of government agents. And third, while research on urban policing often focuses on purposeful avoidance of police contact either because of cynicism (Kirk and Papachristos 2011) or fear of detention (Brayne 2014; Goffman 2015; Stuart 2016), we know less about why individuals who seek police services may, nonetheless, fail to receive them. As local jurisdictions invest more into closing the gap between the government and public, insufficient analysis into *how* initiatives are implemented can legitimize decision-making processes that reinforce the pre-existing social order, rendering community interactions more procedurally symbolic than substantively productive.

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1   Since Gallup began asking in 1993 a nationally representative sample of Americans about their confidence in police as an institution, the range of respondents with "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the police has stayed steadily between 50 and 60 percent, peaking in 2004 at 64 percent and reaching its low in 2015 at 52 percent (Newport 2016).

POLICE AND COMMUNITY MEETINGS: PARTICIPATORY OR POVERTY GOVERNANCE?

A basic insight of participatory governance is that citizens should have opportunities to voice their opinions directly to government (Fung 2006). Formal opportunities, such as ballot initiatives and referendums (Zimring, Hawkins, and Kamin 2001), and less formal, citizen-initiated contact, such as submitting 311 (non-emergency service) requests (see Lerman and Weaver 2014), are important mechanisms for citizens to use to voice particularized concerns. With fewer barriers between a government and its people, decision-making is more transparent, relationships feature more trust, and authority is held more accountable (Fung 2006).

From participatory budgets (Baiocchi 2001) to school management (Shatkin and Gershberg 2007), local jurisdictions have operationalized these bottom-up democratic principles by allocating resources to eliminate institutional and symbolic distance between policymakers and the electorate. But while these participatory government practices promise greater integration between government and citizens, empirical research has revealed persistent shortcomings: California's punitive three-strikes law was the result of too much populist control over sentencing law (Zimring, Hawkins, and Kamin 2001); Boston's community board meetings failed to genuinely empower residents (Levine 2017); and New York City's stop-and-frisk practices often deterred communities from submitting 311 requests (Lerman and Weaver 2014).

Nonetheless, criminal justice policymakers still emphasize the advantages of expanding opportunities for police and residents to interact. While Sir Robert Peel identified the importance of police and public relations as early as 1829, modern efforts began in earnest with community policing. Local and federal law enforcement officials saw community policing as political capital and a substantive response to growing crime and racial tensions following incidents in the late-1980s and early-1990s like the Rodney King beating (Skogan and Hartnett 1997). At the federal level, Congress passed the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which established the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) within the Department of Justice. Since then, COPS has invested billions of dollars to train, guide, and fund local jurisdictions implementing programs that enhance police and community cooperation (COPS Office n.d.). Cities like Chicago, which introduced the Chicago Alterative Policing Strategy in 1993, announced greater decentralization of their police departments and new mission statements that now explicitly prioritized community relations (Skogan and Hartnett 1997). Even though some criticize community policing as more symbolic than substantive (Forman 2004), as animating racial preferences by constructing an "anti-community" (Roussell 2015), and as allowing police to forge partnerships primarily with areas that require the least assistance (Herbert 2006; Rukus, Warner, and Zhang 2017), the basic democratic insight that fewer barriers promote better policing continues to resonate today.

One practice that is both theoretically appealing and practical to implement is community meetings, where residents voice complaints, commendations, and concerns directly to law enforcement. Today's leading criminal justice reforms, such as procedural justice (Sunshine and Tyler 2003), would endorse community meetings as a way to improve the process of policing by incorporating greater public voice and community input. Community meetings can range from beat meetings organized by the police department and moderated by the area-specific commander (Herbert 2006; Roussell and Gascón 2014; Skogan and Hartnett 1997) to those, as studied here, organized by the local civilian review board (CRB).

Over 200 cities across the United States have implemented some version of CRBs (Kaste 2015), and most offer public meetings as either part of monthly board meetings or as separate events. For example, the Citizen Oversight Board of Denver, Colorado, is required by ordinance to hold at least three public meetings every year that provide residents the opportunity to "address issues of concern in their communities" ("Citizen Oversight Board" 2005). The Columbia, Missouri, Citizen Police Review Board's bylaws require "open public comment at all regular monthly meetings of the Board"

("Law and Prosecutor's Office" n.d.) as does the Austin Citizens Review Panel ("Office of the Police Monitor" n.d.). While CRBs typically feature non-sworn citizens conducting formal investigations into specific complaints of officer misconduct, the public meeting component of CRBs provide a venue for residents to voice specific and general grievances directly to policing representatives without filing an official complaint. Rather than beat meetings or police-community councils, which are more civically-oriented and used for information-sharing with residents, the CRB-affiliated community meetings studied here envision improved police and community relations through enhanced police oversight and accountability.

While community meetings are theoretically and practically appealing as a form of participatory governance, police and community do not interact with clean slates. As described in the following, each interaction is imbued with history, both personal and anecdotal, which contextualizes present-day relationships.

Policing as Professional Work

Police administrators are in the "unhappy position of being responsible for an organization that lacks a proven technology for achieving its purpose" (Wilson 1968:63). Despite the elusiveness of a strategy to permanently eliminate crime, the public still holds police responsible for crime. Today's police departments are thus constantly in a state of flux, seeking better technology, strategies, and information to achieve their core public safety mission.

Two hallmarks of modern policing developed in the 1980s and 1990s, during America's "great crime decline" when major categories of crime peaked and then steeply declined (Zimring 2006). First, broken windows, order maintenance, zero tolerance, and similar programs broadly emphasized non-discretionary enforcement of relatively minor, quality-of-life crimes that threatened more criminal activity in the long run if community standards became de-sensitized to disorder (Wilson and Kelling 1982). To make informed decisions, police needed additional and more accurate information on where crimes occur, what strategies worked, and what areas need improvement. From this need for systematic, historical, and comparative data emerged Compstat, which the New York Police Department (NYPD) introduced in the 1990s to track crime trends over time, hold precinct-level commanders accountable in their districts, and to facilitate targeted policing strategies (Bureau of Justice Assistance and Police Executive Research Forum 2013). Given the rapid diffusion of Compstat across police departments (Weisburd et al. 2003), police often prioritize statistics when assessing overall performance and effectiveness.

Another kind of reform which centered on community policing called on police to de-centralize decision-making to invite community input and partnerships to solve problems which citizens had identified (Cordner 2014; Skogan and Hartnett 1997). Early reluctance from police departments fully to embrace community policing stemmed from multiple sources, including perceptions that it was not "real police work" (Maguire 2006) and that it tended to expand police's mandate into duties not traditionally within their domain (Dicker 1998; Skogan 2016). Because democratically elected mayors appoint police chiefs, police enjoy only semi-autonomy when resisting role expansion. For instance, when stakeholders call for the criminalization of homelessness or increased building code enforcement, police must carefully weigh how enforcement decisions will affect their future responsibilities.

Even though police are classic street-level bureaucrats equipped with discretion to define work boundaries (Lipsky 1980), research often overlooks how the (in)activities of citizens constrain the decisions available to these street-level bureaucrats and how services are ultimately distributed. Street-level bureaucrats exercise their discretion based on subjective evaluations of clients' moral worth, social cues, physical features, deservingness, readiness, and other signals (Lipsky 1980; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). While most studies of street-level bureaucrats (with exceptions—e.g., Stuart 2016) focus only on one side of the two-way relationship between service providers and recipients (see Desmond 2014), this study focuses on both police and community members to highlight how their mirroring actions can mutually impede collaborative crime reduction

efforts. By focusing on the "relationship" between police and community as the unit of analysis, this study seeks a better understanding of how outcomes unfold based on responses and iterative exchanges.

Policing as a Neighborhood Condition

Whereas police officers naturally view policing as work, residents see policing as a facet of their neighborhood's living conditions. Police discretion, when left unchecked, has been repeatedly applied with documented bias: more frequent rates of stop-and-frisks (Gelman, Fagan, and Kiss 2007), pretextual traffic stops (Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014), and greater use of excessive force (Smith and Holmes 2014). For example, at the height of the NYPD's stop-and-frisk program in 2011, 88 percent of the 685,724 stops were innocent, and over half the total stops were of African Americans, who comprised only a quarter of the city's population (NYCLU n.d.).

In fact, a growing series of studies document the evolving goals of policing beyond mere crime control and towards surveillance (Brayne 2014; Brayne 2017; Goffman 2015), order maintenance though labeling communities and discretionary enforcement (Duran 2009; Fassin 2013), and poverty governance (Stuart 2016; see also Wacquant 2009). These studies shift the traditional assumption underlying participatory governance—i.e., that greater involvement with government can only benefit citizens—to highlight how heightened government interactions can actually translate into greater regulation, discipline, and social control (Soss and Weaver 2017). As police presence has expanded into school hallways (Rios 2011), hospital waiting rooms (Goffman 2015), other public institutions (Brayne 2014), and even private spaces (Beckett and Herbert 2009), contact with police has increasingly structured people's daily lives. For instance, even when police have "therapeutic" intentions, citizens still develop "cop wisdom" to avoid unwanted police contact (Stuart 2016). Beyond eliminating crime, police encounters have a parallel generative force that communicates who belongs, who is suspicious, and who needs protection from whom.

Thus, for many in poor urban neighborhoods, contact with law enforcement carries a contradiction between the department's public safety ideals and the realities of recurring hassling and harassment. Over time, indirect and direct interactions with law enforcement agents accumulate and cohere into negative general dispositions, which Kirk and Papachristos (2011) conceive as legal cynicism. Legal cynicism threatens both the under-reporting and the un-reporting of illegal actions, thereby weakening the community's collective efficacy, or residents' shared willingness to intervene in unwanted behaviors (Kirk and Matsuda 2011). Without the option of calling for police assistance, legal cynics simultaneously rely less on licit options to resolve disputes and more on illicit, self-help strategies to settle conflicts (Anderson 1999).

At the same time, however, not everyone in poor urban neighborhoods is a legal cynic. Law enforcement has formed productive partnerships, for example, with black clergy (Brunson et al. 2015), social service organizations (Braga et al. 2001), and even homeless mega shelters (Stuart 2016). In Chicago, community representatives have collaborated with law enforcement to pass a gang anti-loitering law (see Meares and Kahan 1998). Rather than being legal cynics, residents who attend community meetings have chosen to speak in a designated forum, travel to the meeting, and submit their complaint to police in public. While recent research on urban policing has predominantly focused on contexts where individuals strategically evade police contact (Brayne 2014; Goffman 2015; Stuart 2016), this study explores why non-legal cynics who proactively seek police services may nonetheless fail to receive them.

This study argues that while both police and residents participate in community meetings, the mutual use of scripts impede community influence despite community input. Scripts are defined as stylized narratives based on generalized knowledge from typical events (Fagan and Geller 2015; Wilkinson and Fagan 1996). Whereas concepts like cultural frames, logics, and lenses emphasize "schemata of interpretation" which guide the unfolding meaning-making process (Goffman 1974:

21), scripts emphasize the patterned responses drawn from understandings already formed. While scripts certainly evolve based on new experiences, they are not primarily used to interpret an event or render it meaningful. Instead, scripts are part of an individual's practical tool kit (see Harding 2007; Swidler 1986), and are available to simplify cognitively demanding interactions. Past research finds that police use situational scripts to identify suspicious behavior and justify intervention (Fagan and Geller 2015; Skolnick 1966; Van Maanen 1978), yet scripts likely dominate other contexts too. This study traces how both police and residents' use of scripts transforms community meetings from a promising exercise of participatory governance to a mechanism legitimating the input process, but only further reinforcing the existing social order. Thus even though residents default to scripts too, when officers engage in perfunctory policing—such as the use of scripts or failing to respond to complaints at all—community input is procedurally welcomed but substantive influence is averted. In doing so, residents must bear the consequences of police inaction.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING
In 1960, Mayor Richard Daley established the Chicago Police Board ("Police Board") as part of a comprehensive plan to reform the city's scandal-plagued police department. The Police Board's responsibilities included independently deciding cases of police misconduct, nominating a police superintendent for the mayor's approval, and adopting rules and regulations governing the police department (Chicago Daily Tribune 1960). Today, the Police Board also features monthly community meetings where residents have the opportunity to "present questions and comments to the board, superintendent of police, and chief administrator of the Independent Police Review Authority [IPRA]."[2] The Chicago mayor appoints every member of the Police Board. While meetings were initially held in the headquarters of the Chicago Police Department, beginning in October 2011, meeting locations began to rotate throughout the city. In the public comment portion of Police Board meetings, the superintendent or his deputy often gave an opening oral report, which was sometimes waived, before inviting public comments. The current president of the Police Board, Lori Lightfoot, explained: "Whether it's an issue on your block, your beat, or an issue beyond your immediate neighborhood, these meetings afford you the chance to be heard" (August 2015).

The civilian members of the Police Board, particularly the president, facilitate the meeting by calling on speakers, asking the police representative for a reply (if not volunteered), and maintaining order. For instance, the president has prohibited a resident from speaking for not removing his hat (September 2009), instructed officers to escort speakers out of the building for refusing to stop speaking (February 2016), prevented residents from bringing in signs (July 2015), and adjourned the meeting because of chanting and protesting (August 2015; March 2016; June 2016).

DATA AND METHODS
The data come from official transcripts of monthly Chicago Police Board meetings from September 2009 through December 2016. Transcripts from September 2009 to December 2013 were obtained via a Freedom of Information Act request to the Police Board, while transcripts from January 2014 to December 2016 were publicly available on the Police Board's website (Chicago Police Board n.d.). Practically, the dataset begins in September 2009, because that is when an authorized court reporter began transcribing meetings. Conceptually, September 2009 provides a sufficiently early starting point to capture the nature of complaints before the recent series of nationalized police violence often associated with Michael Brown's 2014 shooting in Ferguson, Missouri. This dataset also spans

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2 The Chicago Police Board's duties differ from those of the IPRA. While IPRA and CPD's Bureau of Internal Affairs investigate complaints generally, the Police Board decides cases (a) when the superintendent files charges to discharge an officer or suspend him/her for more than 30 days or (b) when IPRA and the superintendent disagree on the discipline of a case. Note that on October 5, 2016, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance to replace IPRA with the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA).

controversial Chicago police shootings of Rekia Boyd (March 2012), Dakota Bright (November 2012), Ronald Johnson (October 2014), and Laquan McDonald (October 2014)—all of which, as described below, activated residents to renew public calls for police reform. Residents were permitted to speak for two minutes, which was differentially enforced depending on the nature of the complaint, whether anyone wanted to reply, and the number of speakers signed up. The subset of residents who attended meetings self-selected into the meetings for reasons generally unavailable, given the nature of the dataset, though speakers' motives can be gleaned from analyzing the nature of their complaints. This seven-year dataset spans three different police superintendents, two different Police Board presidents, and approximately 230 unique speakers who spoke more than 500 times.

A general inductive approach guided analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967). After reading each transcript, I used NVivo and Microsoft Excel to code for several variables including: whether it was a complaint or compliment; the nature of the complaint (e.g., drug activity, youth violence, police violence, after-school loitering, etc.); and what authority replied. Because this dataset contains only the information available in the transcripts, additional demographic data or other contextual information is generally unavailable unless explicitly stated. I then did a second reading of the dataset for more grounded coding of the reasons why residents were dissatisfied with police replies. This process involved focusing on the subset of complaints to which police actually replied, tracing complaints over the course of months, and analyzing the common sources of resident grievances—both the substantive issue that motivated the resident's appearance and the subsequent dissatisfaction with the police's replies. Coding was guided by the following: (a) each speaker was counted as one complaint, even though the speaker may have covered multiple issues; (b) each complaint may have expressed multiple scripts, in which case the complaint was counted as an example of each script; and (c) any statement by police was counted as a reply, even if the officer said only "thank you" or asked the speaker to meet after the meeting. While the nature of residents' complaints spanned multiple subject areas, the back-and-forth exchanges following the initial statement of the complaint followed identifiable patterns, which I reduced to three scripts for both police and residents.

Finally, a third reading of the dataset (a) confirmed the dominant scripts for both police and residents and (b) examined the various iterations and contexts in which they arose. These six scripts, which reveal divergence on the measurement, proximate responsibility, and root causes of community issues, are presented below.

SILENCE AND SCRIPTS: EVIDENCE FROM CHICAGO POLICE BOARD MEETINGS

At Police Board meetings, the dominant reply by the police department representative to resident complaints is *silence*—i.e., no reply at all. During the 88 months analyzed from September 2009 to December 2016, 508 non-unique speakers came to the Police Board to raise various issues. Of those 508 speakers, the police superintendent or deputy superintendent replied to only 133—a reply rate of 26 percent. The IPRA representative—a non-officer who sits on the Police Board and investigates general, non-serious complaints against officers—also primarily remained silent with a reply rate of only 3.5 percent (N=18). While the remaining civilian members of the Police Board, especially the president, replied to almost all complaints, 72 percent of these replies consisted of reminding the speaker that their time had elapsed, asking if a complaint had been formally filed, or simply saying "thank you" and calling upon the next speaker (N=368). Replies such as "thank you" may reflect procedural justice principles (Sunshine and Tyler 2003), but in actuality they amount to a "procedurally just silence" that lacks substantive assistance.

Given the police's silence, speakers have questioned their interest in following up on complaints. For instance, resident Geneva Reed-Veal—the mother of Sandra Bland, who gained national attention after being found hanging in her jail cell following her arrest for a traffic stop—asked: "If you're not writing down the questions [that residents ask], how can you remember what I'm saying if you're

not writing down what I'm saying? I watch body language. I watch the crossing of the arms" (January 2016). Reed-Veal received the same reply as almost three-quarters of all speakers: the police superintendent remained silent, the president of the Police Board said "thank you," and the meeting proceeded onto the next speaker.

When the superintendent or his deputy did reply, exchanges with community members typically defaulted to identifiable scripts, which were repeatedly invoked and which reveal divergent conceptualizations of community issues. Specifically, as summarized in Table 1, scripts revealed and reinforced divergence on three aspects of community issues: (a) how to measure their extent, (b) who is proximately responsible, and (c) what its root causes are.

Police scripts are motivated, at least in part, by the importance of demonstrating successful interventions and reassuring the community of police effectiveness. For instance, the Police Board purposefully invites satisfied speakers back to open up meetings by recounting their positive experience (see, e.g., November 2012). After resident Faye Porter complained about drug activities in the Sixth District (October 2009), the Police Board sought to call on her first in the next month's meeting to report her successful experience. But because she was absent, Superintendent Weis read a letter he addressed to Porter describing the Sixth District Commander's specific actions, including four search warrants and 112 arrests. The letter also documented that Porter was "satisfied and grateful" for the Commander's efforts (November 2009). Reading aloud the letter communicated the police's responsiveness and effectiveness to the audience even though, in actuality, Porter returned five months later to report that things were getting "worse" and she had "attended a couple of these meetings and I haven't seen one ounce of change" (April 2010). Because police will assume—or actively represent—that an absent resident is a satisfied resident, the onus is on dissatisfied residents to return each month. However, as explained in the follow three sub-sections, returning residents with chronic concerns now face the following scripts.

Measuring Community Issues: Crime Statistics Script versus Local Knowledge Script
In response to residents' complaints about growing crime in their neighborhoods, police often invoked the *crime statistics script*, or cited statistics to refute claims that current police strategies are ineffective or that crime is worsening. Out of the 133 times police replied to a complaint, the crime statistics script was invoked 22 times (17 percent). In the 23 times the superintendent or his deputy gave an opening oral report, the crime statistics script was utilized 16 times (70 percent). But whereas the state of policing and crime is typically told as a narrative of numbers, residents invoked the *local knowledge script*, or cited direct experiences and firsthand knowledge of crimes in their neighborhood to call for additional or different policing strategies. Residents invoked this script 21 times. These two scripts signify divergent approaches to measuring community issues. Residents do not experience crime "comparatively" like crime statistics, which are measured from month-to-month or year-to-year; instead, residents experience crime "cumulatively" as each offense builds on the previous, exacerbating anxieties of increasing crime.

After introducing a mandate to dismantle task forces, Superintendent McCarthy focused attention onto "the statistics you're going to hear about, because they're really important" (October 2014). Specifically, Chicago was on track to see its lowest murder rate since the mid-1960s: "I don't want to jinx this, but I'm going to say it out loud without saying it, which is we're down 28 murders compared to last year as we sit here right now, and last year was a year where we had 415 murders in the city" (October 2014). McCarthy's superstitious caution in predicting the city's murder rate signals the importance of the statistic. But even when particular statistics are alarming, police often cite other statistics to provide a more "complete picture" or as a counter-narrative to reported events. After acknowledging "in the first quarter of 2015 we had an uptick in shootings and homicides which caused a lot of consternation, and rightfully so," McCarthy countered that the media failed to report that "in the first quarter of this year we had a 43 percent increase in the number of gun arrests that

Table 1. Police and Community Scripts

Disputed Domain	POLICE SCRIPTS			COMMUNITY SCRIPTS		
	Script	Definition	Example	Script	Definition	Example
Measurement	Crime Statistics	Cite statistics to refute claims that current police strategies are ineffective or that crime is worsening.	"Well, since June of this year, we've actually made 17 arrests...right around the area where you work. We can give more attention to that but, we are enforcing the laws out there."	Local Knowledge	Cite direct experiences and firsthand knowledge of crimes in their neighborhood to call for additional or different policing strategies.	"You believe this, but we live there. I've had nine shootings within three blocks of my house."
Proximate Responsibility	Co-Producer	Shift responsibility for crime reduction and prevention onto the community to do more.	You should hold "positive loitering events" to "reclaim the community."	Co-Producer	Shift responsibility for crime reduction and prevention onto the police to do more.	"I call 911. And calling 911 is like calling 211, you don't see anybody."
Root Cause	Social Problems	Locate the sources and solutions of an issue to societal factors beyond law enforcement control.	Police cannot "solve poverty."	Policing Problem	Include policing as a social problem thereby re-focusing attention on equal police and resident treatment, which is within police control.	"But can police keep our streets safe?" "When do we get a moment of silence for our deceased?"

Note: In addition to these scripts, police can choose silence—no reply at all.

we've made in the City of Chicago" (April 2015). In fact, in the next month, Superintendent McCarthy further explained the importance of looking at the "numbers behind the numbers" to high-light how police-related shootings have dropped in recent years (May 2015). While the uptick in homicides was disturbing, McCarthy cited other statistics to re-assure the public of effective police activity.

Police not only cited crime statistics as evidence of their general effectiveness, but also as a tailored reply to specific complaints. Roberta Bostic was in her fifties, and lived with her mother who was three decades older. Bostic complained about the Bucket Boys, a group of drummers who played right outside and under her bedroom and dining room windows. However, Superintendent Jody Weis replied: "Well, since June of this year we've actually made 17 arrests regarding the Bucket Boys right around the area where you work. We can give more attention to that but we are enforcing the laws out there" (January 2010). Citing the 17 arrests as validation, Weis implied that no additional or alternative law enforcement action was needed, thus implicitly rejecting Bostic's complaint.

Police statistics not only diagnose crime levels, but also verify or invalidate residents' reports. Audrey Pierce came to the Police Board to get help dealing with the shootings, gambling, gangs, and drug dealing that had occurred every year since she moved onto the 1500 block of South Christiana. Interim Superintendent Terry Hillard explained: "Something's wrong because it's not in the system . . . . If there were homicides on your block, it would be in the system, and it's not in the system, Miss Pierce. That's the only thing I can tell you." Yet Pierce reminded Superintendent Hillard: "I have no reason to come up here and not tell the truth" (March 2011). In fact, several residents raised experiences where police called them "liars" when police intelligence conflicted with residents' claims (see, e.g., February 2014; October 2012). Regardless of whether the database or Pierce was objec-tively "right," police executives ultimately decide how police services are distributed. Thus discrepan-cies between police statistics and residents' experiences are typically resolved against residents, who do not receive the additional services requested.

Discrepancies between police statistics and residents' realities frequently arise because the way police make meaning of crime statistics conflicts with the way residents experience crime. Since residents en-dure each crime incrementally and additively, improvements in crime statistics are irrelevant. After First Deputy Superintendent Alfonza Wysinger promised, "It's much better than it was four years ago. It's much better than it was three years ago. It's much better than it was two years ago" (September 2012), resident Lola Chin countered with the local knowledge script: "You believe this but we live there. I've had nine shootings within three blocks of my house. Eight shootings within two blocks. A murder" (September 2012). Neighborhood-level crime statistics provide little assurance to Chin's individual-level lived encounters with homicides outside her home. Yet First Deputy Wysinger's assessment that shootings are lower today than before, and Chin's rebuttal that shootings are at their worst, are not nec-essarily incompatible. Rather, these two views indicate different methods of how crime is measured. Police departments assess performance comparatively from month-to-month or year-to-year, and they reset counts once a new period begins. Residents do not similarly refresh their tolerance, however, and instead experience crime cumulatively with each shooting added onto the last.

Nonetheless, residents recognize that they must continue to report offenses to 911 to avoid future invocation of the crime statistics script. Marrisa Baker explained how it is "really demoralizing to call 911, especially when it's not an emergency," but "I make myself do it" because if "you don't have enough calls for service on a particular address, then [the] strategic task force can't look into it" (September 2012). Even if lower crime statistics do accurately reflect lower crime, resident John Perryman explained that "seven percent doesn't mean much when a corner that we have—we've been bringing up to you guys several times—is still vibrantly, every day, all day, same people, same clothes, doing the same thing [selling drugs]" (August 2014). Thus, despite feeling invalidated by the police's crime statistics script, residents must continue to live through the consequences of police decisions while continuing to dial 911 and vying for police attention—lest they risk being denied fu-ture police assistance.

Locating Proximate Responsibility: Co-Producer Script

Police and residents not only diverge on how community issues should be measured, but also who is proximately responsible. Both police and residents invoked the "co-producer script," defined as shifting responsibility for crime reduction back onto the other. While residents invoked the co-producer script 85 times, police utilized it 17 times out of their 133 total replies (13 percent). In the 23 times the superintendent or his deputy gave an opening report, the co-producer script was utilized 6 times (26 percent). Knowing that successful law enforcement should and must be collaboratively achieved, both police and residents complained about the insufficiency of the other. Shifting blame reveals that when resolving community issues, both police and residents often feel like solo-practitioners rather than co-producers.

For instance, resident John Perryman returned for four consecutive months in 2012 to complain about District Commander Washington's insufficient strategy in responding to flagrant drinking, gambling, and drug dealing around public plazas within the Eleventh District. These issues gave the community a "lawless feel" (August 2012). Commander Washington replied with the co-producer script that shifted responsibility back onto the community. He encouraged residents to hold "positive loitering events," such as barbeques, so the community could collectively reclaim and occupy the space: "The overall strength and making a change in any particular area is going to be the community. And I try to encourage all members of the community, even in that area, I said we have to do some positive loitering events. We have to come together" (August 2012).

Whereas Perryman sought law enforcement action, Commander Washington envisioned community loitering events (August 2012). Residents like Perryman, however, viewed Commander Washington's response as deflective: rather than responding with a plan for police action, the commander questioned the sufficiency of residents' initiatives. Residents interpreted the positive loitering recommendation as implying the community is at fault for inadequately countering drug dealing themselves. Perryman was "fed up" with police's co-producer script, which often suggests [t]hat's just the way the neighborhood is" because "it's like our fault because we are not doing enough in the community" but "I can tell you, we work so hard" (September 2012). Resisting Washington's responsibility-shifting, Perryman pleaded: "I want the Board to please, please understand we are living in a hell, and we are told that we have a barbeque, I would like to hear some real strategies" (September 2012).

Besides positive loitering events, the co-producer script is invoked when police question whether the resident has dialed 911 or when police simply direct the resident to keep calling 911 as the solution—implying that residents have failed in their role as crime reporters (Roussell and Gascón 2014). Living in the same district as Perryman, Solan Wilcox expressed a similar concern for drug dealing. When asked if she called 911, she replied: "I do report it. I call 911. And calling 911 is like calling 211, you don't see anybody" (September 2012). In fact, when residents do dial 911, reporting crimes oftentimes carries a stigma of snitching and, consequently, exposes callers to more harm, especially if police did not abate the threat (Anderson 1999; Fagan and Wilkinson 1998; Carr, Napolitano, and Keating 2007). Resident David Sartore explained how he called 911 after three teenagers assaulted him in Wicker Park, but Sergeant Mullins refused to write a report unless Sartore "agreed to the teenagers who repeatedly threatened to beat me being described as adults in the report" (September 2013). Engaging in risky actions such as alerting police, and receiving police inaction in response, exposes Sartore to continued, if not increased, harm. Sartore explained he had already made "dozens of complaints about some of these same teenagers who have been doing this for years now" (September 2013). Thus residents also deployed the co-producer script, as Perryman articulated to former Superintendent Garry McCarthy: "[W]e can't stick out our necks, if you guys don't have our backs" (December 2013).

Both police and residents understand that crime reduction is a co-produced outcome, but believe the other has taken inadequate action. This mutual burden shifting comes up when officers encourage

residents to "just move" away from a high-crime area (October 2014) or when residents simply demand police execute "more arrests" to deal with drug activity (October 2014). Rather than co-producers, both police officers and residents feel like solo practitioners. Neither police nor residents invoked the notion of co-production as a solution or path forward. Instead, the co-producer script was deployed to identify the shortcomings of the other and to say why they are proximately responsible.

Identifying Root Causes: Social Problems Script versus Policing Problem Script

Police and residents also expressed divergent conceptions of the underlying root causes of community issues. Police often invoked the "social problems script," or attributed community issues to fundamental social problems stemming from drug markets, lack of parental supervision, gun ownership, poverty, and other social ills that were neither caused nor solvable by law enforcement action alone. This script was invoked in 14 out of 133 police replies (11 percent). In the 23 times the superintendent or his deputy gave an opening report, the social problems script was utilized five times (22 percent). Because police cannot eliminate social problems alone, they deflect specific solutions and simply assure residents that they are doing everything they can. In response, residents acknowledge that social problems are an important underlying cause, but they (a) include policing under the umbrella of social problems and (b) re-focus attention on improving police treatment, such as ending police discrimination, violence, and corruption—which police can control. This is called the "policing problem script," which appeared 242 times and was, therefore, the most common community script.

According to police's social problems script, factors outside of the police's control counteract effective law enforcement. Superintendent McCarthy consistently stressed the importance of policing the demand for drugs, rather than arresting the supply: "As long as people want to buy drugs, somebody is going to show up to sell it" (March 2014). Not only are narcotics and gang conflict "criminalized social problem[s]" that police itself cannot "fix" (October 2014), but making matters worse are recent trends in criminal justice policy: "[I]f you pay attention to what's happening in this country, there's a movement towards decriminalization, which is tying our hands even further" (March 2014). McCarthy even analogized law enforcement action against drug dealers to "drinking from a fire hose" since dealers easily switched spots once police suppressed an area (April 2015). Previously, First Deputy Wysinger similarly compared enforcement to "pushing water" (October 2013). These analogies reveal the enormity of the hopelessness with which police view the effort required to solve these issues.

The social problems script also emphasizes the enduring nature of the problem—how it has existed long before today and will remain into the future—which casts doubt on policing as a sufficient independent solution. After a series of residents complained about public drinkers, First Deputy Wysinger explained that he was born in that very district and that "the people who want to drink were drinking out there when I was a kid" (September 2012). This problem was neither "created overnight" nor is it "a law enforcement problem" (September 2012). Instead, these undesirable neighborhood conditions have persisted precisely because they afflict society in general and cannot be resolved through better or additional policing alone. Wysinger continued: "This is a difference that we cannot make a dent in overnight . . . . It's going to take time. All I am asking is that you be patient" (September 2012). In other words, it is not the department's strategies that are insufficient, but rather the residents who are insufficiently patient. By invoking the social problems script, police signal that they feel overworked—that they are being asked to solve deeply entrenched social problems and criticized for not doing so fast enough.

In contrast, while residents acknowledge the importance of alleviating broader structural issues such as poverty and unemployment, they emphasize the importance of police conduct and treatment, which are within police control. For instance, when Superintendent Weis explained that homicide investigations were often thwarted by the "code of silence" which "discourages people from sharing

information with the police," several residents replied that the "blue wall" of silence also exacerbated community trust (November 2009). Similarly, after resident Marissa Baker articulated her complaints, Superintendent McCarthy began to dismiss it by listing poverty, education, and other social issues that police are ill-equipped to alleviate. But Baker interrupted him: "Can you keep our streets safe?" (October 2014). She explained: "I'm not asking the police to solve narcotics in the country or mental health issues or poverty" (October 2014). While Baker then invoked the co-producer script to demand additional police enforcement against open-air drug markets, the policing problem script acknowledges that social problems are important yet intractable, and thus directs attention instead to police treatment.

Residents' policing problem script emphasizes equal treatment from police, but not between themselves and their neighbors in adjacent communities. Rather, the policing problem script demands equal police treatment between officers and residents. Two emblematic examples demonstrate the equal treatment residents sought. First, residents expected civilian victims to be mourned to the same extent as officers' deaths. After a Police Board meeting began with a moment of silence in memory of Officer Thor Soderberg, who was killed in the line of duty, Octavia Mitchell offered her condolences, but then asked:

> With no disrespect, I would like to know why when it's a police officer that's murdered there's always something done about it? I've been asking for three months what happened to my son. No answers . . . He was killed in April. May, he was scheduled to go to prom. June, he was scheduled to graduate. July, he would have been 19 years old. No answers. What make their parents better than me? (July 2010).

From residents' perspectives, their murdered family members are forgotten, while slain officers are immediately memorialized. In another episode, when the Police Board asked for a moment of silence for Officer Thomas Wortham, who had been shot and killed while off-duty during an attempted robbery the previous night, an audience member interrupted: "When do we get a moment of silence for our deceased?" (May 2010). Dorothy Holmes pointed out another disparity in how the murdered are remembered: "The police officers that life been taken already [sic], they have a memorial wall with their names in there. Why can't we have the same for our kids that's being murdered?" (March 2016). Whereas officers are commemorated on a memorial wall, residents are left with printing their own "fucking picture on a shirt" (August 2015).

Second, besides non-existent mourning for civilian victims, residents perceived slow investigations as low prioritization. Without updates on cases, family members fear their case has been deemed less important. Resident Precious Edwards came to the Police Board to ask for answers about police killing her 20 year-old brother Dakota Bright a month earlier. Her brother was "killed and left in the cold dirt and grass for several hours in handcuffs." Rather than being notified by police of the death, Precious' mother went to the scene to see what happened, only to have "police surround[ed] us and demand[ed] that we leave the scene, saying that no questions could be answered" (December 2012). Ilana Rosenzweig, the Chief Administrator of IPRA, promised Precious that IPRA was actively investigating the shooting, but Rosenzweig cut her answer short because "I have a bit of a family emergency, so I have to run out quickly, but I am going to hand out cards and you can maybe quickly give me your contact information and then I can make sure that you get contacted. Okay?" (December 2012).

Invoking the policing problems script's demand for equal treatment, Precious snapped back: "Okay. But you say you have a family emergency. This is a family emergency, my brother was killed less than a month ago, I don't know anything. Like right now I want to know is the police officer that shot and killed my brother, what is being done to him? Is he out working?" Rosenzweig replied: "I can't comment on that" (December 2012). Rosenzweig's assertion of a family emergency affronted

Precious, as Rosenzweig failed to acknowledge Precious' own ongoing family emergency that she had already endured for a month.

THE SOCIAL ORDER THAT SCRIPTS REVEAL

Whereas residents' local knowledge and co-producer scripts call for more police enforcement (N=92), the policing problem script demands more police reform and, typically, less enforcement (N=242). Figure 1 illustrates the number of speakers calling either for more enforcement or more reform per meeting during the seven years studied.

Beginning in early 2012 when off-duty Officer Dante Servin shot into a noisy group and killed 22-year old Rekia Boyd, the policing problem script dominated most meetings—i.e., residents increasingly called for more reform rather than more enforcement. However, although residents invoked the policing problem script 242 times, police replied on only 24 occasions (10 percent). In other words, silence was the most common reply to residents' calls for reform to reduce police violence, corruption, discrimination, misconduct, and other policing issues. Thus, while police replied with silence to requests for more enforcement only 48 percent of the time (N=44), police replied with silence to requests for more reform 90 percent of the time (N=218).

As meetings increasingly concentrated on controversial police killings and called for more reform, the total number of speakers also increased from 53 in 2010 and 38 in 2011, to 83 in 2015 and to its peak of 122 in 2016. In fact, in these meetings, more new residents came to speak for the first time. However, as illustrated in Figure 2, many of these first timers were also one timers—they did not return to speak for a second meeting.

Thus the data indicate a correlation among the following over time: (a) controversial police killings and meetings dominated by demands for more police reform (Figure 1); (b) an increase in total and first time speakers at these meetings (Figure 2); (c) police typically remaining silent in response to demands for more reform; and (d) a larger proportion of first time speakers not returning (Figure 2). However, the meeting transcripts do not adjudicate whether any of these trends are causal, and whether police silence in response to community demands for police reform was necessarily intentional. Because such meetings activated both new and more speakers, the Police Board often rushed the current speaker to finish so everyone could have the opportunity to voice their concerns. Moreover, it is possible that first time speakers continued to attend, but just did not speak. Nonetheless, while future research should identify the precise cause, it is clear here that police inaction was largely the result. As a resident explained during one of the meetings with highest number of speakers calling for more reform: "So this is my eighth meeting I've been to and I have to say that the only thing that I've seen change is the amount of outrage at your inactions" (February 2016). Next month, Dorothy Holmes reiterated: "And I know when we come in here, ya'll [sic] care less what we talking about. But we getting tired because we aren't getting what we want . . . No, we aren't crazy, we just tired as hell about not getting no response back from you" (March 2016).

The predominance of silence and scripts reinforces the existing social order between police and residents. Even though residents resort to scripts too, police hold ultimate authority in allocating services. Whether due to police inaction or impasse, silence and inabilities to agree on solutions leave residents bearing the state of affairs that gave rise to their original grievances. And since, as explained above, an absent resident is assumed to be satisfied, community meetings place the onus on residents to return each month to continue voicing their complaints. While envisioned as a form of participatory governance, the predominance of silence and scripts in community meetings can transform them into a forum where residents have input but without influence.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

During Chicago Police Board's monthly public meetings, silence and recurring scripts often substituted for constructive discussion. These scripts reveal how police and residents differentially conceptualize how to measure, locate proximate responsibility, and identify the root causes of
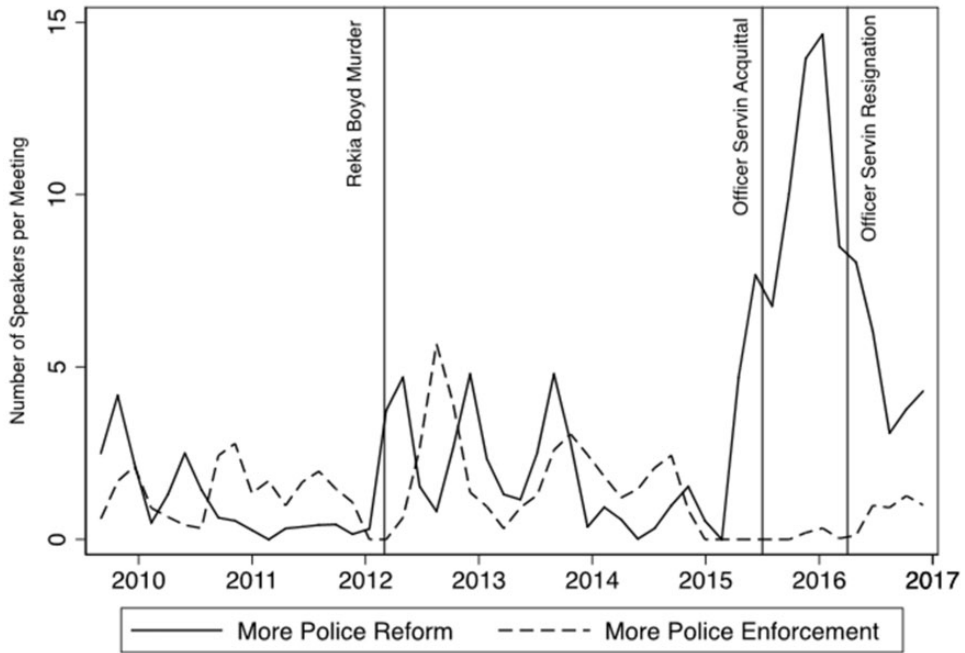
Figure 1. Number of Speakers Demanding "More Police Reform" versus "More Police Enforcement" per Chicago Police Board Meeting
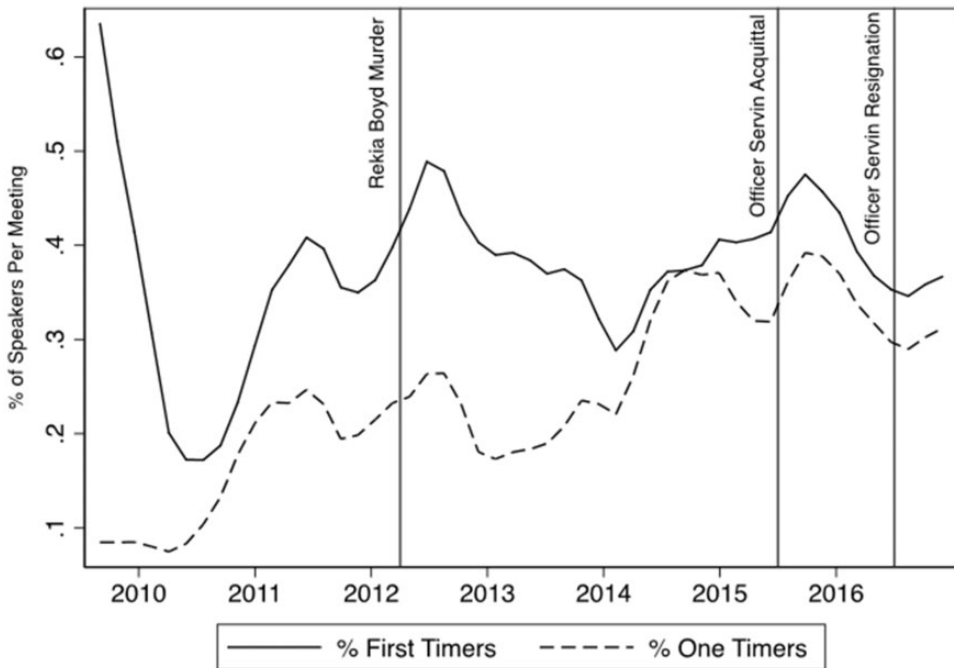
Figure 2. Percentage of First-time Speakers and One-time Speakers per Chicago Police Board Meeting

community issues. First, regarding measurement, the gap between the crime statistics script and the local knowledge script aligns with the distinction between the objective absence of crime and subjective feelings of safety. Police statistics are poor predictors of community sentiments, as events such as a highly publicized police killing can chill 911 calls for service and superficially decrease crime rates while police and community relations worsen (Desmond, Papachristos, and Kirk 2016).

Second, regarding proximate responsibility, the dual utilization of the co-producer script reflects genuine perceptions of inadequate police services and community complacency. While police interactions should be more procedurally just (Sunshine and Tyler 2003), residents possess an underlying dissatisfaction with the quality of police services. And third, regarding root causes, the gap between the social problems script and the policing problems script reflects police's sociological explanation for imperfect law enforcement. As more and new residents increasingly called for police reforms rather than additional enforcement—i.e., by invoking the policing problem script rather than the local knowledge or co-producer scripts—police silence also increased, a pattern which future studies should explore causally.

The use of silence and scripts are examples of perfunctory policing, or the superficial performance of procedural requirements without implementing changes in substantive outcomes. Unlike therapeutic policing, where officers seek to correct attitudes and behaviors of the urban poor (Stuart 2016), or hyper-, broken windows, and other forms of intensified police scrutiny (Goffman 2015; Rios 2011; Wilson and Kelling 1982), perfunctory policing represents a policing strategy where officers symbolically submit to external controls from the public and community by inviting input but without allowing influence.

These findings have several implications. On the one hand, more interactions between police officers and community members are not always better, and in fact, may be detrimental. By facilitating face-to-face interactions with police, meetings can render transparent the unsatisfactory decision-making processes that initially motivated the resident to attend in the first place. On the other hand, while meetings may fail to achieve substantive changes in how police allocate resources or in the default assumptions between police and community, they affirmatively reinforce the existing social order through police silence and scripts, which leave residents shouldering the consequences of police inaction. Because police contact is always generative and communicative, researchers and policymakers must carefully design and evaluate the appropriate contexts in which police and residents interact. Important factors shaping meeting success include whether a sworn officer moderates the meeting and if not, whether the facilitator pressures or protects police from replying; whether the meeting's purpose is to correct officer misconduct post-hoc or approve policies beforehand; and what recourse is available to residents who remain dissatisfied.

Three recommendations are important. First, given opposing approaches to measuring and experiencing crime trends, police should consult other data sources—such as community surveys and sentiment proxies—to evaluate performance, crime, and community perceptions. These data sources must be made public so residents can genuinely contest the police's claims of effectiveness when officers invoke the crime statistics script. Second, while previous research has focused on citizen perceptions of unequal police treatment towards residents across different neighborhoods, the policing problems script reveals the importance of residents' perceptions of unequal treatment with police officers themselves. The mutual recognition of lost lives, which police can observe without necessarily admitting officer wrongdoing, is one step towards equal treatment. Finally, given police's social problems script, which reveals concerns about police's expanding mandate, society must begin to re-think the occasions we demand police services and why we are demanding police specifically. Otherwise, residents force police to trade off between the breadth and depth of their mandate—incentivizing police investment in "force-multiplying technologies" promising capacity expansion, but simultaneously raising surveillance concerns (Brayne 2017).

The unrealized gains promised by more participatory government are not limited to the policing sphere. As jurisdictions establish innovative ways to directly engage with residents and render

decision-making processes more transparent, this article's findings demonstrate how neither government officials nor community members' enduring perceptions automatically change. To the extent that participatory government continues to be a set of practices adopted rather than incentives realigned, their democratic promises of greater citizen voice will remain deferred.

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